

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

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Executive Secretary

3/9/83

Date

WASHINGTON

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March 7, 1983

Executive Registry

83-12891

Chrono Info

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE GEORGE P. SHULTZ
Secretary of State

SUBJECT: Wick Letter of February 24 on the
1984 HF WARC (S)

I share the concerns expressed in a recent Charlie Wick memorandum (attached) over potential problems for the U.S. and other Western countries at the High Frequency World Administrative Radio Conference scheduled to meet in January 1984 (WARC-84). It is for problems of this nature that we established such interagency activities as the SIG on International Communication and Information Policy chaired by Bill Schneider and the International Broadcasting Committee mandated under NSDD-77. It is my understanding that planning and coordinating activities of all U.S. broadcasting needs and positions for WARC-84 are on-going within the SIG, and that these activities include bilateral and multilateral discussions with other countries. (S)

It is essential that we provide our personal direct support to all aspects of ITU matters and the HF WARC-84 in particular. The importance of the HF spectrum to the U.S. cannot be underestimated, not only for U.S. international broadcasting, but for other national security needs. We must convey to all U.S. and non-U.S. parties the importance that the highest level of government places on its needs in the HF spectrum. (S)

Since U.S. positions and concerns are well known and have been stated in the past (for example, at WARC-79), it is not clear how a one year delay would change our relative positions. I would be willing to support a delay if we have sufficient reason to believe that the U.S. can obtain the necessary votes for a delay, that the U.S. position can be improved significantly, and that the U.S. will not be embarrassed by "imposing" a delay without coming up with anything substantially new. (S)

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I would therefore request that the Wick proposal to delay the WARC-84 meeting by one year be addressed by the Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy at the Department of State, in coordination as necessary with the planning element of the International Broadcasting Committee and other appropriate agencies. A recommendation should be provided as soon as possible. (S)

Bill

William P. Clark

Attachment
Wick Proposal

cc: The Secretary of Defense
The Secretary of Commerce
The Director, Central Intelligence
The Director, U.S. Information Agency

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Executive Registry
83-1289

February 24, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR:

The Honorable
Judge William P. Clark, Jr.
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
The White House

FROM:

Charles Z. Wick

SUBJECT:

The Frequency Crisis

A task force should be appointed as quickly as possible to decide a strategy for protecting the availability of short wave frequencies used by U.S. international broadcasters. The task force's first assignment should be to find a way to get a one year postponement of the January, 1984 W.A.R.C. Conference. This should be done at the May 2nd Administrative Council Meeting of the ITU.

The Voice of America and other Western broadcasters are in imminent danger of losing many of their radio frequencies at the 1984 W.A.R.C. Conference. If this occurs, the ability of VOA and other Western stations to broadcast will be severely curtailed.

The U.S. is bound by an agreement, which the USG unfortunately acceded to at the last W.A.R.C. Conference in 1979, to convene another Conference which would assign frequencies among the nations of the world. This conference is now scheduled for next January.

There are more demands for radio broadcasting frequencies in the short wave band than there are channels to accommodate them. With the development of technology, and the cost of short wave transmitters and receivers coming down, many developing countries can now afford short wave broadcasting. The United States is the principal target for those seeking frequency assignments because of our multiple use of frequencies. VOA is the largest international user of external frequencies, in part because of Soviet jamming, in part because of our need for external relay sites to broadcast to strategic parts of the world. Historically VOA has had unlimited access to the radio spectrum. In 1984 Third World countries will argue that it is necessary to give priority to their domestic broadcasting and the international broadcasters will take second place.

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The Soviet Union has been able to take advantage of the problem and exploit it as part of its overall orchestrated plan to destroy the effectiveness of the VOA and RFE/RL through international organizations.

The Soviet Union supports the Third World countries since it has the choice of either signing or rejecting the W.A.R.C. 84 decision. Soviet broadcasting emanates from transmitters located in its domestic territories. Only host nations are allocated frequencies. Thus the Soviets have their own frequencies.

The United States does not have the option of repudiating W.A.R.C. since the majority of our broadcasts are transmitted from relay stations in host nations to which are registered the frequencies VOA uses. Our continued operation is dependent upon the good will of these host countries. In all likelihood these host countries would sign the W.A.R.C. agreement, effectively binding us to the W.A.R.C. decision.

To complement their jamming, the Soviets have adopted a sophisticated strategy of advancing their interests through the manipulation of international organizations. In 1936 the League of Nations adopted a treaty relating to the use of broadcasting. In September 1982, 46 years later, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet signed this treaty. The provisions of the treaty limit broadcasts to other countries which may be viewed as detrimental to their interests. The Soviets clearly consider U.S. broadcasting in this category.

The U.N. Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has had for the last ten years a proposal on the books to prohibit broadcasting from a satellite to a country other than the transmitting country, without its consent. Up until recently we have been able to delay that proposal. However, in late 1982, a vote was taken and it was in favor of the proposal by a margin of 85 to 15. Although the resolution is not binding, it shows the spirit of 85 countries who said, in effect, we don't think it is proper for a nation to broadcast into a territory of another without its consent. This philosophy is inconsistent with the long adhered to U.S. policy of free-flow of information and if extended to short wave radio could mean the end of the Voice.

The attack on Western broadcasting will emerge in full strength at the 1984 W.A.R.C. Conference where these nationalistic issues will be the focus and the United States will be made the culprit.

We need to send high-level officials to the Foreign Ministries of selected member countries requesting that they instruct their representative to the May 2nd, Administrative Council

meeting of the ITU, to support a request for a one year postponement of the W.A.R.C. 84. There are no intelligent, alternative plans that will maintain the frequency status quo for the Voice of America and which appear to have a chance of success at W.A.R.C. 84. Our long-range objective should be to develop such plans for presentation at a delayed W.A.R.C.

February 24, 1983

Executive Registry
83-1289/2

Dear Bill:

THE VOICE OF AMERICA IS IN DANGER OF BEING WIPED OFF THE AIR!

The Soviet Union is leading a coalition of Third World countries working to limit VOA's access to the airwaves, jeopardizing our one billion dollar planned expansion program and the very existence of the Voice.

As you know, in NSDD #45 (July 15, 1982) the President stated that "International broadcasting constitutes an important instrument of the national security policy of the United States." The President further directed that

"...planning for the upcoming high frequency World Administrative Radio Conference (W.A.R.C.) should be accelerated, and priority given to protecting and where possible expanding the frequencies available to the U.S. for international short wave broadcasting."

The World Administrative Radio Conference scheduled for next January 1984 will review the mechanism by which frequencies are allocated to the 150 plus members of the International Telecommunications Union, a special interest body of the United Nations. VOA is the largest user of external frequencies in the

The Honorable
Judge William P. Clark, Jr.
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
The White House

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Director, USIA
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world, in part because of its need to counter Soviet jamming, in part because of its need for external relay sites to broadcast to strategic points around the world. Historically VOA has had unlimited access to the radio spectrum.

In all likelihood we would lose needed frequencies next January at W.A.R.C.

The difficulties we experienced in protecting our interests at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Nairobi last November were considerable. You will recall that only after a great effort we were able to keep Israel in the ITU by a slim four vote margin. Our problems in Nairobi together with the growing clamor by Third World countries to dedicate more frequencies to their domestic use, have led experts in this field to conclude that our chances of "expanding" our frequencies at W.A.R.C. as per NSDD 45 are virtually nil. Merely protecting what we now have (albeit at a time when we are entering into an aggressive expansion program and would seek to do more) will be a difficult task requiring the full energies of our government and probably will not be successful.

RFE/RL would similarly suffer the disastrous consequences of a conference stacked against us.

I met yesterday with Leonard Marks, recently named to head the U.S. delegation to W.A.R.C., and reviewed the harsh realities of the situation. We both believe that it would be in our best interests to attempt to arrange a deferral of the January 1984 W.A.R.C. meeting. While difficult to achieve, this might be arranged through obtaining the support of twenty additional countries in the forty-one member ITU Administrative Council and successfully presenting a motion for deferral at the May 2, 1983 Administrative Council meeting. Mickey Gardner, the head of our delegation to the recent ITU conference in Nairobi, agrees with this assessment and encourages the approach of seeking a delay.

A significant component of the Soviet campaign to destroy the Voice is their manipulation of control of our access to frequencies through international bodies such as the ITU.

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The Soviet Union supports the Third World countries since it has the choice of either signing or rejecting the W.A.R.C. 84 decision. Soviet broadcasting emanates from transmitters located in its domestic territories. Only host nations are allocated frequencies. Thus the Soviets have their own frequencies.

The United States does not have the option of repudiating W.A.R.C. since the majority of our broadcasts are transmitted from relay stations in host nations to which are registered the frequencies VOA uses. Our continued operation is dependent upon the good will of these host countries. In all likelihood these host countries would sign the W.A.R.C. agreement, effectively binding us to the W.A.R.C. decision.

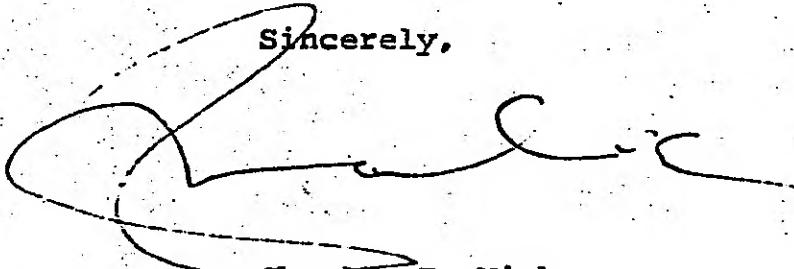
Developing an aggressive strategy to avoid or minimize the potential damage to the VOA as stated herein above and to counter increasing efforts by the Soviets to work through Third World countries against our interests should be an urgent agenda item for the International Broadcasting Committee.

The enclosed memorandum provides relevant background material on the challenges we face in this area.

Due to the limited time frame in which we would have to prepare a strategy to secure deferral at the May meeting, I suggest that you direct the International Broadcasting Committee to convene a special meeting as soon as possible to evaluate this urgent issue.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Charles Z. Wick

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